

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, October 18, 1990

Published Since 1877

## Soviets rejoice in new law for religious freedom

By Martha Skelton

MOSCOW (BP) — After seven decades of religious repression in the Soviet Union, a historic law enacted Oct. 1 forbids the government from interfering with religious activities.

The law, passed by the Soviet parliament, improves the legal status of religious organizations and gives Soviet citizens the right to study religion in homes and in private schools, in the country or abroad.

"We strongly believe it will have a positive influence on our churches," said Gregory Komendant, president of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists. "We have had past problems with the government, but this new law will protect us from all punishment."

For thousands of Baptists and other religious believers in the Soviet Union, the new law also clears the way for the Sunday schools, youth activities, and charitable ministries they already are operating.

"We rejoice that it gives a legal basis for what is already being done. This is something to thank God for," said Keith Parker, the Foreign Mission Board's area director for Europe.

The Soviet constitution long has guaranteed "freedom of religion," but in practice all but basic worship services were stifled. Christian believers were denied job advancement, higher education, and housing because of their faith; and some were imprisoned. Places of worship were confiscated and put to non-religious uses. The state also financed campaigns to promote atheism in schools, through the media, and in so-called Museums of Religion and Atheism — some located in former cathedrals, Parker said.

Passage of the new law, observers agree, is a de facto acknowledgment that 70 years of atheistic teaching, propaganda, and discrimination against believers has failed to diminish, much less eradicate, religious practice in the Soviet Union.

Komendant attended the parliament debate on the new law, accompanied by Alexei Bichkov, UECB vice president. Peter Shatrov, vice president of the Russian regional Baptist union, attended similar sessions of the Russian republic's representatives.

"All people are pleased and glad that such a law was developed and adopted," said Komendant. He addressed the deputies about a point in the third article of the draft law, and it was adopted with the revision he requested. A reference had been made about the form of worship services being "not bad for human health." Concerned that this phrase might be used against churches in certain situations, Komendant asked that it be dropped. Instead, the law affirms all human rights in relation to worship.

An equality provision in the law will affect both young and old church members. No longer will young people be excluded from educational opportunities because of their church involvement. And retiring pastors, like all workers, will be eligible for state pensions. "We are equal with all, equal in pay and pensions," Komendant said.

The educational rights have been extended to all churches equally, so students from the evangelical tradition will have the same prospects as Orthodox or Catholic students.

The government will continue to have a religion department, but its function will change. It will be an information center, not a body monitoring the churches, said Komendant. Local authorities will be the governmental bodies with which churches will deal, he said.

The diminished government relationship to atheism is a key provision of the law. While atheism remains an integral part of communist dogma, the new law prohibits the government from funding either religious or atheistic activities and propaganda. For years religious leaders, including Baptists, called for the government to put atheism and religion on equal legal footing.

They presented these and other ideas in discussions with government representatives about what provisions the new law should contain.

"Atheism ought to be the same voluntary organization like religion — self-supported, self-governed," Bichkov said after a 1988 meeting with government officials. He was general secretary of the UECB for many years.

Some members of the Soviet parliament are Christian, but none are evangelical, Komendant said. But many "are sympathetic to us," he added.

Observers of religion in the Soviet Union see ambiguities and unanswered questions in the new law and its implementation. But they expressed a guarded optimism that fundamental change has come to relieve decades of inequality for the nation's churches and believers.

Peter Reddaway, an expert on Soviet religion at George Washington University in Washington, told the Associated Press: "The authorities have been loosening restrictions for a couple of years, and now they're putting it in writing." He estimates 50 million Muslims, 30 million Russian Orthodox followers, 6 million Catholics, 2 million Jews, and 1 million Baptists live in the Soviet Union.

Bichkov has participated in preliminary meetings to establish a new Bible society in the Soviet Union. In the course of these discussions, he has become concerned that some Russian Orthodox leaders want to get as close as possible to their former state church supremacy.

Evangelicals and those of other faiths, who remember the oppression they suffered during those years, are not encouraged. "When atheism oppressed us, we were together. When oppression disappeared, (Orthodox leaders) repudiated 70 years of experience," Bichkov said. "We are afraid they will become the national, institutional church."

Bichkov said he has seen indications that the Russian Orthodox Church may insist that any Bible society operate under its jurisdiction rather than serve all faiths from an independent stance. The first Russian Bible Society, organized in 1813, was closed later by the czar under pressure from the Orthodox church.

"Orthodox leaders (expect) the time is coming for the restoration of their power in some way," Bichkov stated. "But our Baptists are militant also. If the Orthodox say one word, Baptists say two words back."

Skelton writes for FMB.

## Chinese government confirms Baptist teacher dead in Oct. 2 air crash

GUANGZHOU, China (BP) — Chinese government officials confirmed Oct. 5 that Southern Baptist teacher Mary Anna Gilbert was among 127 people killed in the Oct. 2 crash of a hijacked Chinese jetliner in Guangzhou, China.

Chinese officials told the U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou that investigators had identified Gilbert's remains and would immediately prepare them for return to the United States.

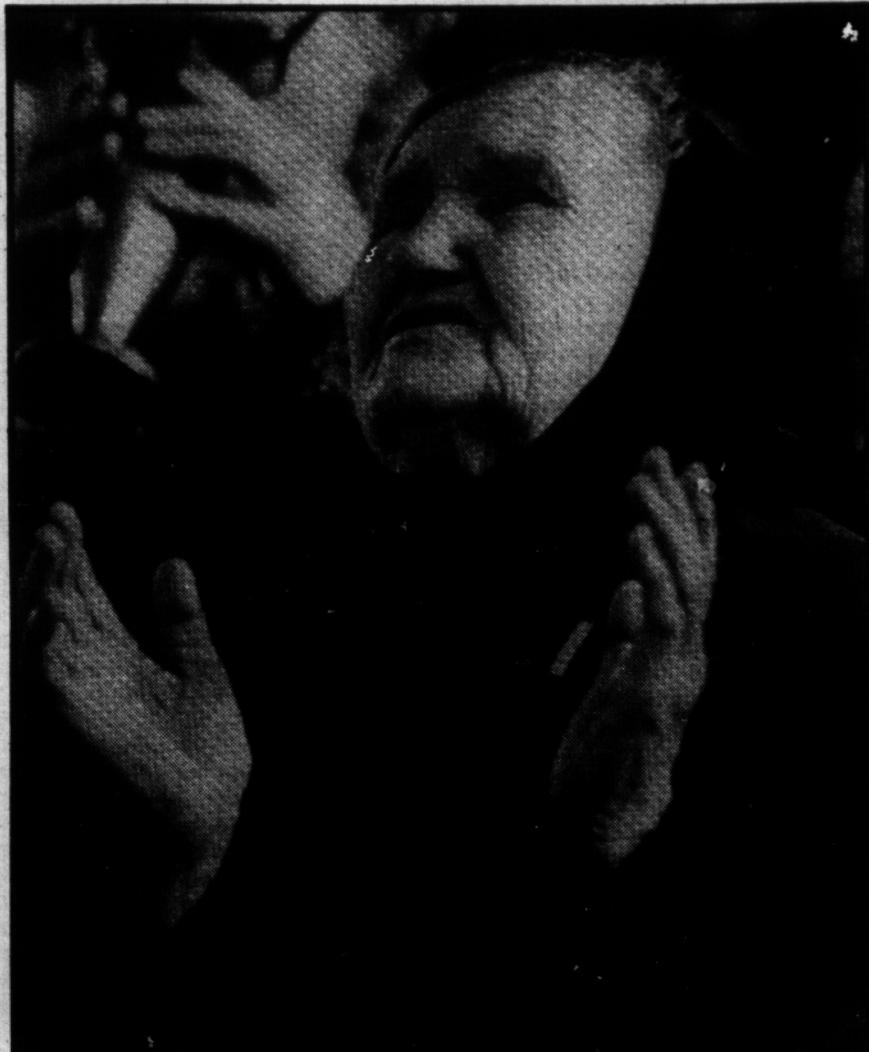
Gilbert, 23, and co-worker Erin

Thomas, 30, of Harrah, Okla., were returning to teaching assignments at Jia Ying University after a weekend trip, when hijackers tried to divert their Chinese Boeing 737 to Taiwan or Hong Kong. The failed attempt ended in a fiery crash-landing.

Thomas, who was seated next to Gilbert, survived the crash and is in stable condition in a Guangzhou hospital. She has a dislocated shoulder, several broken bones and second- and third-degree burns on one leg. Her parents, Paul Thomas of

Newalla, Okla., and Diane Aimes of Norman, Okla., have left for Hong Kong and were scheduled to arrive Oct. 7 in Guangzhou.

Gilbert, of Alexander City, Ala., had taught only about one month at Jia Ying University in Meixian, in Guangdong Province. She had planned to teach English in China for two years through Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist service organization. She was the daughter of a retired pastor, Clayton Gilbert, and Mrs. Gilbert.



Even years of repression could not kill religious faith in the Soviet Union, as evidenced by this woman's moment of praise during a recent worship service in the country. Now, the Soviet government has stopped trying to monitor religious practice and enacted a law to guarantee freedom of religion. (FMB photo by Don Rutledge)

## Changes in Russia open door for evangelism

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Stun-

ning changes in Russia and Eastern Europe have created an open door for evangelism and church planting, a Southern Baptist missionary told students at Theological Seminary during a missions day program.

"There is a tremendous hunger on the part of the Russian people for the Bible and the gospel of Jesus Christ," according to Earl Martin, director of the Institute for Missions and Evangelism at Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruchlikon, Switzerland.

Martin, who has been involved with mission projects in the Soviet Union, spoke during Southwestern's Missions Day Chapel Oct. 9. This year's theme was "From/To Russia With Love."

Also speaking at the event was George Lozuk, Southern Baptists' first fraternal representative to Russian Baptists. He and his wife, Veda, will leave next month for Moscow where they will be involved in evangelism and religious education.

"God has opened so many doors in Europe," said Lozuk, a former missionary in South America. "And there is all the difference in the world in a closed door and an open door. The openness is an opportunity before you. It's a beckoning."

Lozuk shared with seminary students the challenge of working in the Soviet Union. "Do you realize that the Soviet Union is a land of some 290 million people?" he asked. "When the sun sets on the western-most part of this land it is already rising on the eastern-most part. This land has 11 time zones from east to west and it covers one-sixth of this globe we call earth."

The Lozuk family will be working along side Russian Baptists. The Union of

Evangelical Christians-Baptists reports a membership of 250,000 in 3,000 churches.

Lozuk said the new religious freedom in the Soviet Union, spurred by the recent passage of the "freedom of conscience" act, is opening a door for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

"We are told to go and disciple all nations," he said. "We see that God has called many, and is calling others, and will continue to call them as he opens doors."

Lozuk told students God expects Christians "to be the light in dark places. We can go in and we can share Christ. We can share where true joy comes from," he said.

One Southwestern student did exactly that on a missions trip to Leningrad this summer. Joe Kelley went to the Russian city with a group of Texas Baptist students to help renovate an old cathedral which is now being used as a Baptist church.

David Price, another Southwestern student, was part of a group of Mississippi Baptist students who worked on the same project in Leningrad. He was impressed with the Russian Baptists' zeal for God and evangelism.

"I left challenged and humbled. They don't just wear the name tag that says Christian. They really live it," he said.

As the door to missions opportunity continues to open in Russia, Martin said it is important for Southern Baptists to avoid a "messianic" mentality. "Russian Baptists don't need us to bring revival to them, they are already experiencing it," he said. "We need to work alongside them, as a link and liaison to help make things happen."

# Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

## No creed?

Southern Baptists have long prided themselves on having no creed but the Bible, but efforts to establish a creed continue to surface from time to time. The latest is the move by the trustees of Southern Seminary to impose the four points of the Peace Committee report on the faculty of that institution.

Those who are there can stay; but if they aspire to promotion or tenure, they must subscribe to the four points. New faculty members must subscribe immediately.

The four points are these:

Direct creation of mankind; and, therefore, Adam and Eve were real people.

The named authors did indeed write the biblical books attributed to them by those books.

The miracles described in scripture did indeed occur as supernatural events.

The historical narratives in the Bible are accurate.

As the Peace Committee indicated, it is likely that most Southern Baptists believe these four points and would like to know that seminary professors are teaching in that light. There was no survey ever made to determine if that is the case, however. The Sunday School Board offered to perform such a survey, and the Peace Committee turned down the offer.

Even if most Southern Baptists believe thus, however, to place those restrictions on a seminary faculty makes those restrictions a creed. Perhaps we want a creed and need a creed. If such is the case, however, let's simply admit it and not continue to say we have none.

A new wrinkle is beginning to emerge, however, as regards creedal efforts at Southern Seminary. Information has surfaced noting that in 1926 the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution in support of a belief in the Genesis account of creation and sought to impose such a restriction on the faculty of Southern Seminary. The seminary administration, while noting its allegiance to such an account, in 1927 sought the aid of a legal firm to determine what might be the impact of imposing such a restriction on the Southern faculty.

The resulting opinion pointed out that the charter of the seminary bound the trustees and administration of the seminary to "preserve inviolable, and maintain forever in the management and control of this institution, the fundamental laws established by the Education Convention," which met in Greenville, S.C. on April 30, 1858, and by which Southern Seminary was established. Those "fundamental laws," the legal opinion noted, included the seminary's Abstract of Principles, a document of 20 articles by which the seminary faculty has been guided since its inception.

The opinion noted that no one could legally add to or take away from those 20 articles of the Abstract of Principles.

This opinion was reported immediately to the Board of Trustees of Southern Seminary; and evidently the matter was dropped, for the Abstract of Principles has continued inviolate until the recent decision concerning the Peace Committee report.

The opinion noted that, according to

Kentucky law at the time, if the charter were to be violated in such way, the attorney general of the state would be empowered to return the assets of the institution to the donors thereof or their heirs.

The Abstract of Principles has been signed by every faculty member who has ever taught at Southern Seminary for 132 years, and the understanding is that they are more doctrinally restrictive than the Baptist Faith and Message statement.

The Peace Committee report was supposed to be simply an attempt to interpret the Baptist Faith and Message statement.

In its recommendations section, the Peace Committee recognized the importance to the seminaries of their statements of faith or, in the case of Southern Seminary, its Abstract of Principles, and stated the following:

"We recommend that, in view of the intense public discussions of the last few years, the trustees determine the theological positions of the seminary administrators and faculty members in order to guide them in renewing their determination to stand by their commitment to the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963, to the Glorieta Statement of their intention to work toward reconciliation of the conflict in the convention, and to their own institutional declarations of faith as the guidelines by which they will teach their students in preparation for gospel ministry in the churches, missions fields, and service to the denomination."

The Peace Committee never called for faculty members to be hired according to their adherence to the four



points of the report. The entire Peace Committee report was an attempt to determine what Baptists believe about Article I of the Baptist Faith and Message statement that the Bible "has . . . truth without any mixture of error for its matter." The committee determined that while all Southern Baptists subscribed to that statement, some believed about it one way and some another. The four points were simply an illustration of what the committee felt most Baptists believed about Article I of the Baptist Faith and Message statement. Yet they have become a creed at Southern.

The Glorieta statement by the six seminary presidents, by the way, subscribed to the miracles as history; to the full inspiration of the Bible, which is not errant in any area of reality; and to the Bible's infallible power and binding authority.

The Peace Committee said, "We must never try to impose upon individual Southern Baptists nor local congregations a specific view of how scripture must be interpreted. If such an attempt is made, then reconciliation is not the goal nor is it possible to achieve."

## The first donation to history

Steve Wampler, a student at Mississippi State University, has made the first donation for Associated Baptist Press, the new press service for Southern Baptists.

There have been a number of donations by this time, but Steve's was the first. He provided the gift early in July to be used to provide a free and unbiased news service in case Al Shackleford and Dan Martin of Baptist Press were fired. They were fired, and Associated Baptist Press came into being the same day.

Associated Baptist Press has its own board, and it is not a board that can be taken over. The board is determined that it will be balanced.

The 15-person board comes from several walks of Southern Baptist life. Four have state paper backgrounds. Three come from secular news operations. One is a college journalism professor. Three are pastors. One is a pastor's wife. One is a former WMU executive now with a major Baptist university. One is a lawyer, and Anna Olive Bannister of Georgia.

At this point, there are no editors at Baptist Press. The executive vice

## Baptist Beliefs . . . God, no respecter of persons

By Herschel H. Hobbs

It is not good for news sources to be controlled by the entities about which they need to write from time to time, but a great deal of Southern Baptist news operations are so controlled. Control by the SBC Executive Committee was the problem that led to the firings of Shackleford and Martin, the Baptist Press editors.

Nine of the Southern Baptist state papers have their own boards, and a tenth will move to that position shortly.

Associated Baptist Press has its own board, and it is not a board that can be taken over. The board is determined that it will be balanced.

Associated Baptist Press is on the move. It was not established in response to the Baptist Press firings but was already on the drawing board and ready for announcement that day.

It is the brain child and product of several state paper editors and really grows out of the editors' networking operation, which has been in place since 1984.

The finances of Associated Baptist Press are still a bit shaky at this time, but the news service is moving ahead in the belief that the financial needs will be met.

that salvation must be by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Stated in the modern scene, a man lives in a Christian environment, reads the Bible, hears the gospel, yet does not trust in Jesus. A pagan in Africa has none of these, yet does not do as good as he knows, and does not trust in Jesus. Both will be in hell. But the degree of punishment of the former will be greater than that of the latter. God is just; he holds us responsible for the light we have.

For those who claim to be Christian, Charles Spurgeon asked the more penetrating question. Asked if the pagan who never hears the gospel is lost, Spurgeon replied, "Are we saved if we do not preach the gospel to him?" It is a question to ponder.

Herschel Hobbs is pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City.

Dogs are much like people. Usually only one is barking at anything in particular; the others are barking at him.

Call Leader, Elwood, Ind.

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Chris and Diane Machen

## MC to host youth conference

The 1990 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference at the Mississippi College coliseum will feature Frank Pollard as principal speaker.

Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, will speak at the opening Thursday afternoon session of the conference which takes place Dec. 27-28.

Theme of the conference is "Delight Thyself Also in the Lord," from Psalm 37:4.

Other platform personalities include Jerry Pipes, Phil and Russ, and Chris and Diane Machen, all of Texas.

The Machens, of Dallas, Tex., will be music leaders for the conference, which attracts more than 2,000 young people annually.

Jerry Pipes, of Lewisville, Tex., will speak three times including the titles, "Go to the Light," and "Share the Light."

Phil Hubbard and Russ Reeves of Phil and Russ, are a gospel/comedy team from Arlington, Tex.

Others on the program include two

musicians from Mississippi. They are Sheldon Gooch and Lisa Leavell, both from Jackson.

The conference will begin at 2 p.m.

on Dec. 27 and conclude the next day

at 3:30. Pre-registration is not re-

quired, but it is requested. To pre-

register, send \$3 per person to

Evangelism Department, Mississippi

Baptist Convention Board, Box 530,

Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Those who

pre-register by Dec. 14 will have a box

with the church name on it in the

registration area at the MC coliseum.

Jackson area motels include Best

Western Metro Inn, 355-7483; Day's

Inn Metro, 948-0680; Holiday Inn

Southwest, 355-3472; La Quinta Inn,

373-6110; Metrocenter Ramada Inn,

944-1150; Scottish Inns of America,

969-1144; and Stonewall Jackson Motor

Lodge, 354-1653.

The motion concerning criteria for a possible relocation for the FMB — which has been in Richmond since the founding of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 — was introduced by Ron E. Wilson, a pastor from Thousand Oaks, Calif., who said he was not seeking to have the board moved but was only calling for a committee to "develop the criteria which the board would use to decide the merits of moving the Foreign Mission Board."

When the motion came to the floor, Wilson asked that it be tabled until the Dec. 10-12 trustee meeting because it might be perceived as "political."

After the board meeting, a key

## Baptist Building dedicates prayer room

By Tim Nicholas

The new prayer room at the Mississippi Baptist Building in Jackson was dedicated on Oct. 5.

The employee-led service inaugurated the prayer room for regular use with the encouragement of Convention Board Executive Director Bill Causey.

In his message concerning the purpose of the prayer room, Causey said "... what takes place in this building ought to be, must be, heaven-directed and may the prayer room be a constant reminder that you and I have not done our work when we shuffle all the papers, study all the calendars, make all the plans for all the meetings, go to those meetings, and return to do it all over again."

Causey noted that "We must be reminded that the real activity here is to find out what God wants; and, then, if you will, to help God do that, providing human hands, hearts, feet, lives through which we he may do that work."

Julius Thompson, director of the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, organized the service. His office coordinates promotion of Bold Mission Prayer Thrust, the intent of which is to get Baptists more involved in prayer. Thompson said he hopes the prayer room installation in the Baptist Building would be an encouragement for individual churches to open prayer rooms.

The Second Front Page

# The Baptist Record

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## FMB discusses relocation

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) — Trustees of the Foreign Mission Board in their Oct. 8-10 meeting discussed the merits of moving their headquarters and adopted a "status quo" 1991 budget of \$182 million.

The actions came during the trustee meeting, in which directors also ap-

pointed 48 new overseas personnel,

voted to send missionaries to Bul-

garia, held a dialogue with pastors

from across the nation, clarified

policy on mission service by divorced

persons and received a report endor-

sing continued open and unbiased

news reporting by its communications

staff.

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When the motion came to the floor,

Wilson asked that it be tabled until the

Dec. 10-12 trustee meeting because it

might be perceived as "political."

After the board meeting, a key

fundamental-conservative member of

the board, Paige Patterson, president

of Criswell College in Dallas, dropped

a hint the move might be aimed at

Virginia Baptists, particularly if they

alter their support of the denomina-

tion's unified giving plan, the

Cooperative Program.

Patterson, a major architect in the

12-year-old fundamental-conservative

effort to take control of the convention,

told a Richmond, Va., reporter, "If

Virginia Baptists take precipitous ac-

tion to hurt the Cooperative Program,

they (agency trustees) might be ad-

vised to consider whether to keep the

agency in that kind of milieu."

Messengers to the annual meeting

of the Baptist General Association of

Virginia in November will consider a

budget proposal which would reduce

by half undesignated contributions to

the Cooperative Program. It would

allocate the other half to specified

Baptists causes, including the Baptist

Joint Committee on Public Affairs

and Associated Baptist Press.

Wilson, considered a Patterson al-

ly on the board, denied his motion was

a reaction to the Virginia proposal.

Instead, he cited concerns with the safe-

ty of the board's Monument Avenue

neighborhood, the efficiency of the

30-year-old building, the lack of ade-

quate air travel to Richmond, the

need for a more central location to

"communicate with the convention's

constituency" and lack of meeting

space.

"My proposal has nothing to do with

Virginia politics," he told the Religious

Herald, news journal of the BGAV.

Other observers, however, said they believe denominational politics is more of a factor than the lack of meeting space.

Because the board is located in Virginia, it has more local members from the state than from any other state. Fundamental-conservatives privately say they believe Virginia Baptists wield too much influence on the mission board.

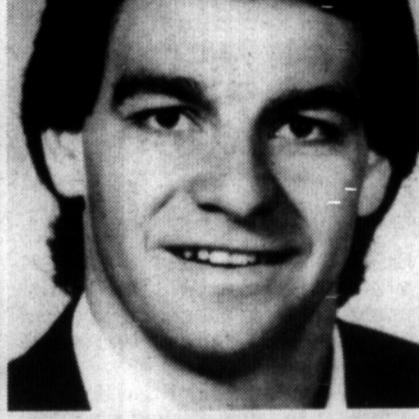
The president of the BGAV, Raymond Spence, pastor of Second Church, Richmond, said he perceived the action and Patterson's comments as a threat.

"I think it's a subtle threat to Virginia Baptists, no matter how veiled they would like to put it. I'm sorry the board's leadership feels that they need to threaten Virginia Baptists when Virginia Baptists are in no way trying to be a threat to the Southern Baptist Convention."

The 1991 budget of \$182,760,000  
(See FMB on page 4)



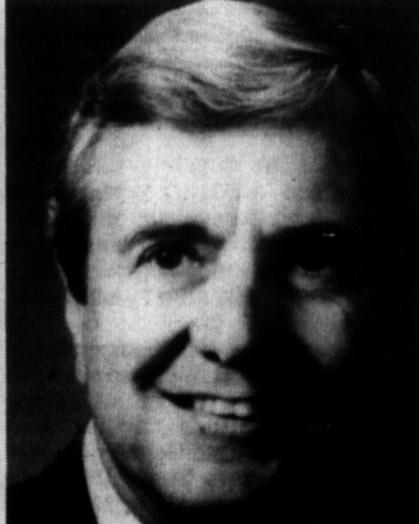
Phil and Russ



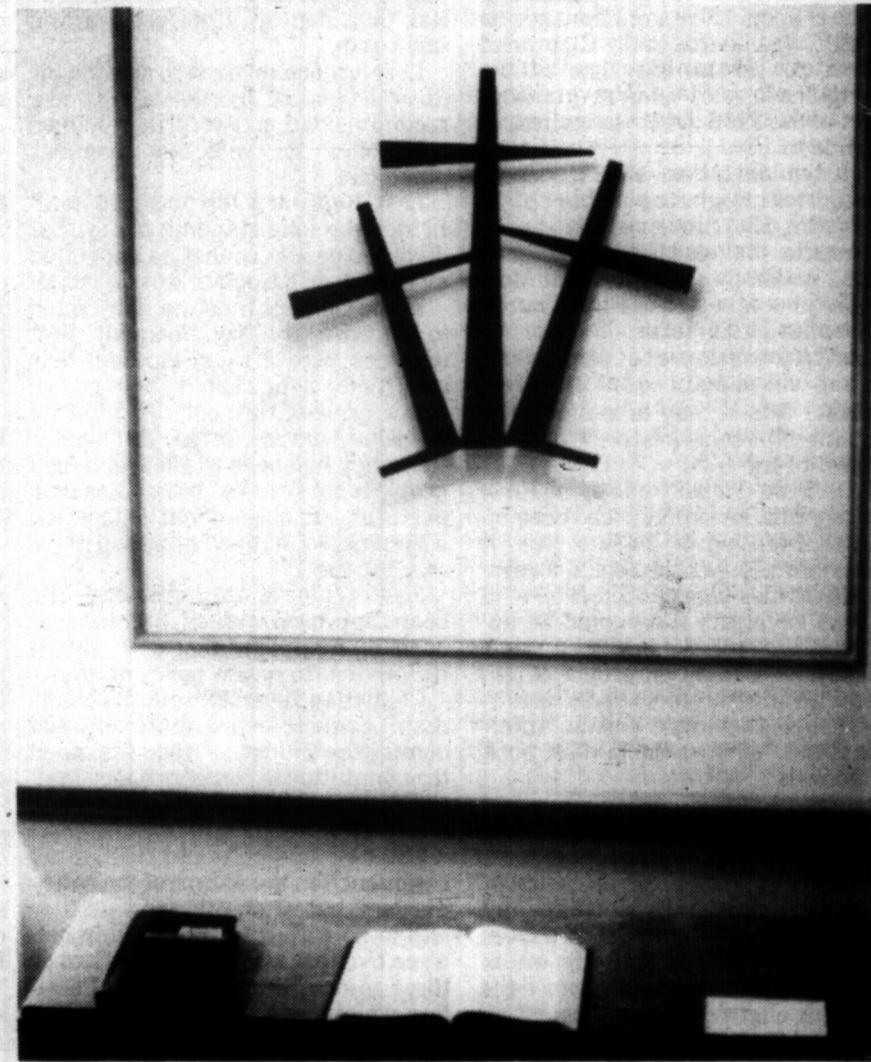
Jerry Pipes



Lisa Leavell



Frank Pollard



# Peace Committee members differ on report

By Dan Martin and Marv Knox

ROANOKE, Va. (ABP) — The 1987 report of the SBC Peace Committee was not intended to be a "creedal supplement," but it was intended to be taken as a whole, Chairman Charles Fuller said.

Fuller and three other Peace Committee members — whose viewpoints represented the diversity of the group — spoke about the report in the wake of action by trustees of Southern Seminary, in Louisville, Ky., to use the report as a guideline for hiring and promoting faculty.

The interpretation of Fuller, pastor of First Church of Roanoke, Va., was similar to that of Jerry Vines, pastor of First Church of Jacksonville, Fla. It differed from the interpretations of Herschel Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Church of Oklahoma City, and Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Church in suburban Atlanta.

In a called meeting Sept. 24, Southern Seminary trustees adopted a recommendation that says: "In addition to existing guidelines, the Peace Committee report — both the findings

and recommendations — serve as a guideline for the employment of temporary and permanent faculty, the promotion of existing faculty and the granting of tenure."

The findings section of the report says "most Baptists believe" that "Adam and Eve were real people," "named authors did indeed write the biblical books attributed to them," miracles "did indeed occur as supernatural events in history" and "historical narratives given by biblical authors are indeed accurate and reliable."

The recommendations section calls on SBC institutions "to build their professional staffs and faculties from those who clearly reflect such dominant convictions and beliefs held by Southern Baptists at large."

A decision to make the findings section of the report binding on any SBC institution would be an apparent contradiction to bylaw 33 of the SBC constitution. It says, "The adoption of recommendations contained in reports to the convention shall not

bind the convention on any other matters in the body of reports; but the convention reserves the right to consider and amend the body of all reports."

Fuller, in a letter sent in response to inquiries by four Southern Seminary trustees and made available to Associated Baptist Press, said that when the report was presented to the 1987 SBC annual meeting: "I was instructed to say that we felt the entire report had equal importance. Because our recommendations were based on our findings, we felt one without the other would be either incomplete or confusing."

He added: "We determined there was no need for any statement of faith other than the Baptist Faith and Message (a confessional statement adopted by the SBC in 1925 and revised in 1963). Therefore, we resisted the idea of drafting anything which would be viewed as a creedal supplement.

"Our struggle was over how various Southern Baptists interpreted the (Baptist Faith and Message) statement that the scripture has . . . truth,

without any mixture of error, for its matter."

"It was that discussion which led to the findings. (The) four examples (are) the position we believed most Southern Baptists would take if asked what they felt was the meaning of 'truth without mixture of error' when applied to the nature and origin of the Bible. The four examples are not designed to be the first four statements of an unfinished, unpublished list of other such statements. Neither were they designed to be a specific checklist as much as they were given to define what we felt was a majority view of the Bible among rank-and-file Southern Baptists."

The definitions were offered to describe the "type of theological conservative we felt needed to be recognized, legitimized and given rightful positions on agency staffs and seminary faculties," Fuller said.

In an interview with ABP, Fuller said he knew only what he had read about the Southern Seminary action.

"From what I read, it appears the trustees were trying to honor not only the recommendations but the spirit of the recommendations," he noted. "I still believe the Peace Committee report is a good report, but it must be applied and carried out in its entirety, or it is unbalanced."

Hobbs, who chaired the committee that wrote the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement, said he does not believe the findings were intended to have equal weight with the recommendations.

In fact, he said, he opposed a last-minute attempt to move the four items from the findings to the recommendations section.

"I hit the floor," he said. "Where it (the four-part theological statement) is, it's information; . . . you move it to a recommendation, it becomes creedal."

He compared the findings to an SBC resolution, which states the opinion of people present and voting at a particular meeting. The recommenda-

tions are more like an SBC motion, which is binding on SBC institutions, he added.

"My own judgment is that to take the statement from the findings and enforce it as if it were a motion would be an abuse of it, not a use of it," Hobbs said.

Application of the report should be made only to future faculty, not any present members, he noted: "There was no intention of purging present faculty members. And as a stipulation for advancement, that was not the intent of the committee."

Vines, immediately past president of the SBC, said seminary trustees' use of the report "is just a logical next step in the whole process (of turning the SBC in a more conservative direction). I am very pleased with the trustee action."

The four illustrations are to be understood "as guidelines," he added. "They certainly are not exhaustive, but illustrative."

Vines said the Peace Committee discussed at length whether to include the illustration in the recommendations section, but when "there was agreement the illustrations carried equal weight with the recommendations, we voted for the report."

Daniel Vestal, who is chair of "the fellowship," a moderate SBC coalition, said: "On the surface, what the trustees did appear to the layman or average pastor to be good, but in fact is damaging to the long-term health of the institution."

"Using the four illustrations of scripture to prove orthodoxy makes a person confess his faith and belief in the authority of scriptures by agreeing to a certain interpretation."

"This makes the Peace Committee report exactly what we said it would not become — a creed and litmus test of orthodoxy. When you add these things, you narrow it in such a way as to become creedal rather than confessional."

Martin is interim news director, ABP; Knox is editor, Kentucky Western Recorder.

## FMB

From page 3

represents a 4.5 percent increase over 1990. Board President R. Keith Parks said the increase is not enough.

"The numbers in this budget will

maintain the status quo but provide very little for growth," he said. "Therefore, these numbers should serve as a challenge to all Southern Baptists to give more generously."

He said there is a disparity between budget dollars and missions needed, and called on Southern Baptists to rise above the bitter 12-year denominational fight.

"These (budget) figures mean that we must not allow any differences, whether political or interpretive, to erode missions support."

Prior to the meeting of trustees, a group of about 100 pastors from across the SBC was invited to the Richmond offices to get an overview of the evangelistic and church-planting aims of the FMB. Of those invited, 41 attended.

Trustee chairman Bill Hancock, pastor of Highview Church in Louisville, Ky., conceived the idea of the pastor dialogue, which featured participation by SBC President Morris Chapman, pastor of First Church of Wichita Falls, Texas.

During the dialogue session, several pastors raised fears about the directions the board may take under the fundamental-conservatives now in control of the SBC.

One, Scott Walker, pastor of First Church, Charleston, S.C., who grew up in the Philippines as the son of missionaries and is himself a former summer missionary to Liberia, said he was uncertain if he could be appointed as a missionary "because I might have a slight difference of opinion with other brothers and sisters in our convention over certain interpretations" such as the biblical book of Genesis.

Parks responded: "We have not changed the qualifications for mission appointment. Our approach, for as long as I've known anything about missions, has been . . . that any authentic Southern Baptist who loves the Lord, is called of God, who wants to be a part of reaching the world for Christ, is eligible for appointment as

a missionary."

Chapman told participants he has a commitment to listen, learn and pray as he interacts with those who disagree with him, and said he wants "to lead this convention beyond the perceptions of reality of political coalitions."

But while acknowledging his promise to "enlarge the tent," he added: "You need to hear very carefully that, again and again, I have also indicated the parameters of that tent."

"I have a deep and abiding conviction about the holy Word of God. I do, unapologetically, and with all of my heart, believe this Bible is to be the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God . . . It is not, with me, a matter of theological debate. It is a matter that I serve a perfect God. And the only way I can reason in my faith . . . is that a perfect God would have done no less than deposit a perfect word on this earth."

In reference to mission service for divorced people, trustees approved a recommendation that further defined the policy for selecting overseas personnel.

Last February the trustees reaffirmed the long standing policy that divorced people cannot be appointed as career or associate missionaries.

In the October meeting, they voted to remove the requirement that divorced people must provide their own funding for assignments of two years or less through the Internal Revenue Service Corps. Previously, the policy had been to allow divorced people to serve in ISC roles other than pastoral or theological education assignments if they provided their own funding.

Just prior to adjournment, the board approved without discussion or opposition appointment of a special committee "to review policy matters."

Chairman Hancock said the chairman's council — board officers and committee chairs — recommended the committee to consider policy matters which have been referred to council.

Later he said he would "rather not comment" on the nature of the policy matters, but when pressed said they had to do with the "relationship between trustees and staff" and "two or three minor, minor theological matters which have been brought up."

He said they were not directed at Parks and described them as "nothing of a critical nature."

In his concluding statement, Hancock said, "there are two or three items hanging fire right now that need to be responded to. We need to respond in orderly ways to eliminate rumors that cause people to do things on their own."

He told reporters the "two or three things" have to do with a statement of faith for the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and with the board's response to an anticipated increase in designated gifts to foreign missions from moderate-conservatives seeking to bypass the SBC Cooperative Program.

The seminary at Ruschlikon was founded in 1949 by the FMB, but ownership was transferred to European Baptists in 1988. The transfer was accompanied with a set of recommendations, among which was a request for the seminary board to "consider the possibility of a written statement of European Baptist principles . . . which may give expression to the seminary's biblical commitment and to which seminary teachers would subscribe."

Consideration of such a statement has been slowed by European Baptists' traditional aversion to creeds and the theological and social diversity among Baptists unions in Europe.

At the October board meeting, some trustees expressed frustration at what they view as a lack of progress, while others encourage the board to give Ruschlikon more time.

Hancock sided with those who want action: "It's been two years (since the recommendation was presented). We've given them plenty of time."

The FMB provides an annual subsidy to the seminary, this year amounting to about \$340,000, or about 25 percent of the seminary's operating budget. After 1992, the subsidy is expected to be phased out.

This story was compiled by ABP Interim News Director Dan Martin from information provided by the news and information staff of the Foreign Mission Board; Robert Dilday, associate editor, Virginia Religious Herald; Ed Briggs, religious editor, Richmond Times-Dispatch; and Thomas Mullen, staff writer, Richmond News Leader.

## Fund grant applications due Nov. 1

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union is accepting applications for Second Century Fund grants through Nov. 1.

The Second Century Fund is an endowment fund established by WMU during its centennial year as a gift to future generations of women in missions. All contributions are invested permanently with only the interest earned on the principal given as grants.

Grants are given in three categories: to develop missions organizations abroad; to enhance WMU leadership development in the United States; and to foster education about missions and WMU among Southern Baptist seminary students and faculty.

Grant recipients will be announced during the Jan. 5-11 WMU executive board meeting.

Grant applications can be requested from: Second Century Fund, Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, Ala. 35283-0010, Attn: Mary Helen Dixon.

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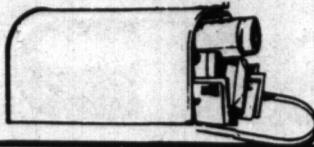
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# Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld. The withholding of names will be at the discretion of the editor.

## "I'm a moderate"

Editor:

I attended the SBC in New Orleans as a messenger from First Church, Bay St. Louis.

I was thinking I was a conservative and knowing I was not a liberal.

Now after much study of the Baptist Faith and Message, I've decided that I'm a moderate.

I have been very disturbed by the mean spirit that I've detected in some letters to the editor by those expressing the conservative view, which boils down to this: you believe as we tell you to believe or get out.

I don't see how a Southern Baptist can be a liberal; and if there be such, I've never met one. They would have to be people who have just wiggled themselves into the wrong denomination.

This gives the conservatives no right to group the liberal fringe with the moderates and call us all liberals. But their key success, in my opinion, has been the cleverly deceptive use of this term, liberal, in describing all those in disagreement with them.

If the facts were all laid out on the table for open and free discussion under the guidelines of the Baptist Faith and Message, I think this problem would go away, as there would not be enough supporters on either side of the middle to matter. But the main problem with this whole affair is apathy and ignorance of the facts by the laity. This works in favor of those in power; and with the control of the media, they can be expected to stay there.

Could some of those so-called liberal teachers just be good teachers who on occasion take the part of the "devil's advocate" in trying to stimulate mental exercise and debate as a part of the learning process?

In closing I would like to echo the thoughts of Sue Freeman in her letter in the July 19 issue: "I think Jerry Clower would make a great president of the SBC."

Perry F. Gibson  
Waveland

## A deserved rest

Editor:

I'm really not sure just how to express the news of your retirement. But I'll say what I feel — congratulations on a very deserved rest.

While we've never met, I feel I know you through your editorials. I'm sure you presented all sides with fairness. I admire you for being able to adjust to changes.

I am no longer a Southern Baptist. I'm not sure, but it seems it was a cigarette commercial, "I'd rather fight than switch." Well, I took the opposite view and switched denominations. It wasn't easy, but I'm happy. My wife didn't join me, not did I try to get her to. We still take the Baptist Record, and I contribute as much to the Baptist church as I do my own.

I do wish for you and yours a very happy and enjoyable retirement. I'm now 73 and thoroughly enjoy it. I feel sure you will. I've found retirement the most rewarding period in my life. No schedules, no bosses, (other than my wife, which is okay). Time to read and think. In other words, I enjoy life.

I do know that God takes care of his own, and that he'll take care of you and me.

Name withheld by editor

## Out of range

Editor:

Just as a remote control can control a car or an airplane with impulses, so the Holy Spirit can "control" a child of God that is walking with him. Through impulses, he (Holy Spirit) can tell the person to go left, go right, do this, do that.

Just as a car can sometimes go too far out and the remote has no control over it until it is brought within range again, so a child of God can sometimes find himself out of the range of God's Spirit; and he, too, must bring himself back under the subjection of the Spirit's guidance.

Linda Leach  
Greenville

## The work at Lifeline

Editor:

God has so richly blessed us since Shirley Culpepper wrote about Lifeline Baptist Mission collecting Betty Crocker coupons to furnish the kitchen in our new church. Thanks so much!

Some people may not understand about Lifeline. It's a very small and poor mission; but the people are so rich in God's love, no one notices the lack of worldly goods. The Holy Spirit is so obvious here, visitors have even commented on it. We've been told that before Lifeline came here, the only time God's name was mentioned in their homes was when mama and dad were fighting. Now mama and daddy are saved and are coming to church. (mobile chapel — Baptist Convention.) We lead about 20 or more a year to Jesus, then we follow up with one-on-one discipleship training.

If you feel led to help, please feel free! You'll never regret it. We've been here six years; and, if it takes six more . . . Please pray and help any way you can. The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

God said to build a church to bless the hearts of men.

And we tried the very best we could but funds are really thin.

We were not blessed with worldly goods like others seem to be.

But we would not trade with them the love between you and me.

We're baking cakes and cookies, having roadblocks and washing cars. We're having garage sales and fish fries and selling foods in jars.

We plan to build the church that God wants to have out here.

The love that's in this place is from the one we hold so dear.

Glatia Buchs, W.M.U. Dir.  
R.R. #1, Box 314  
Florence, MS 39073

## SHARE in Indiana

Editor:

Data gathering related to evangelism in America reveals the need for reaching our cities with the gospel is critical to winning our nation to Christ.

In an effort to respond to this need, the Evangelism Division of the Home Mission Board, has launched a project called SHARE (Share His Abundant Redemption Everywhere) in Metropolitan Baptist Association of Central Indiana. As SHARE facilitator, may I point out two basic objectives:

1. to present the gospel to the 500,000

residences in the Greater Indianapolis area by the end of 1992, and

2. to strengthen the 66 churches and missions in evangelism by training 2,500 people to witness.

We are now targeting the summer of 1991 for the churches to go door to door using the Religious Opinion Poll which opens the door for the witness to give his personal testimony and hopefully read the Eternal Life Booklet. Three Indianapolis churches that piloted the SHARE Project last summer have all reported that a great door is open now and there is a hunger for the Good News.

One vital aspect of implementing this strategy requires SHARE Partnership churches. This means a linkage between the local Indianapolis churches and churches from across the Southern Baptist Convention to send adult witnessing teams to witness for approximately a week at their own expense.

If pastors and churches would be interested in sending an adult witnessing team to the Indianapolis area for a week in June, July, or August of 1991, please write Cloyd Sullins, 952 North Pennsylvania Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204 or call at (317) 636-6728.

Cloyd Sullins  
Indianapolis, Ind.

## Help in contradictions

Editor:

Mr. Ray A. Thompson recently had a letter in the *Baptist Record* asking for help in some so-called contradictions in the Bible. The help I offer may not be enough, but here goes.

Does Mark 2:26 contradict I Samuel 21:1? The former uses the word "Abiathar," the latter "Ahimelech." Either is correct, as is "Ahiah."

Does I Chron. 21:1 contradict 2 Samuel 24:1? "Satan" is used in the former and "he" in the latter. So?

Did God come from Temen? (Hab. 3:3) The Hebrew signifies south. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran." This refers to the visible glory of God when he gave The Law upon Mt. Sinai. (Deut. 33:2)

I Cor. 1:14-16: Paul said that he baptized "none of you except Crispus and Gaius." He then said, "Yes, I did baptize the house of Stephanas also." No contradiction.

What about the sun standing still in Joshua 10:13,14? Yes, the earth rotates on its axis, but Joshua knew nothing of the "axis." God did extend daylight for a full day over the battle area. The important thing is that it happened — and that it happened in response to Joshua's prayer. About dividing moderates from fundamentalists: If that is one's desire, follow Joshua's example and do it the old fashioned way — by prayer.

James K. Burke  
Tylertown

## Be true to ourselves

Editor:

As I listen to people talk and read our Baptist paper it seems to me that there has crept in among us, perhaps unawares, an attitude that belies the fact that many of us have stopped trusting God.

Some think that these are perilous times to be a Christian, but I rather think that the times are truly dangerous only for those who have not truly surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter how deep the waters, how strong the wind, how loud the fury, or how great the loss if our lives are anchored in Christ.

One's integrity is worth more than any job. This is true even when we are wrong in our convictions, for we must be true to our own understanding of

God's will for our lives until such time as God brings us to a different conviction.

Otherwise, our relationships are a quagmire of deceit. If we must suffer wrongly, that is no less than our Lord did; and it is through just such suffering that we come to understand the kind of sorrow our Lord experienced on our behalf.

There is no room for deceit, hatred, envy, pride, jealousy, nor any other sin in our relationship with God nor with our brothers and sisters in Christ. If what we really are won't stand in the fire it needs to be burned up. There is no surer way to the hope of a right relationship with God or our brothers than for all that is not of Christ to be erased.

Yes, there is controversy in our convention. Yes, Satan is using it every way he can to destroy; but God in his love and mercy is just waiting for his children to trust him to turn it into something really good for all those who love him and are called according to his purpose. There is a way for each of us to be true to ourselves, namely, to be true to our Lord in everything we do, say, and think. For the record, I refuse to be separated from my brother by those things which have no place in Jesus' disciples' lives.

Bobby T. Hood  
Laurel

## Prime-time witness

Editor:

Hello. My name is Charles Kirk. I was saved April 9, 1989, and became a member of Bethlehem Church, Walnut, Miss. Our church baptized 102 in 1989. This was done by praying together, loving one another, and witnessing.

I realize that I'm a new Christian and have got a lot to learn. But I wonder why we as Christians let Satan take over TV, radio, and the newspaper, etc. I believe we're living in the last days. The Bible's being fulfilled more every day.

Why isn't there a commercial on TV about "Jesus Saves"? I know the expense would be worth it. Three hundred million people watched the Super Bowl and nothing about Jesus Saves. I don't understand it; are we concerned about lost people of America?

I realize the Baptist missions spend a lot of money in foreign countries, and that's terrific. I say keep up the good work. But let's not forget Americans. Recently I saw a tattoo of Satan holding the American flag on a man's arm. It was saying Satan has America all wrapped up.

Surely we Baptists can afford at least one prime-time commercial on national TV. Sure, Satan will get mad and try to stop it; but "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." We've got the Master on our side; we can't lose.

I'm just a 33-year-old country boy who didn't even graduate from high school, but I feel like we can do more.

C. Kirk  
Walnut, MS

## Need for books

Editor:

The Oklahoma Baptist University, in agreement with the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, is opening Ministry Training Institutes throughout Indiana. These institutes are going to be very vital to the work of Southern Baptists here in Indiana.

In order for this work to be successful, we are going to need a theological library for the students. We are in need of a wide variety of theological books and would greatly appreciate any contributions.

If you can help, please send your books to the following address: 280 East College Street or P. O. Box 73, Hartsville, IN 47244.

Thank you very much.

Jeff Rimes, U.S.-2 missionary  
South Central Baptist  
Association  
(812) 546-0152

## A false impression

Editor:

A Baptist Press story recently featured the establishment of a new legally independent entity for the funding of theological education at Southern Seminary: Alumni and Friends of Theological Education, Inc.

I wish to clarify a false impression I inadvertently conveyed in a statement made in the interview. All money given through this foundation to SBTS can only be used to fund educational programs approved by the seminary trustees.

For example, a general endowment fund may be established to supplement all faculty salaries. Donors may also establish an endowed chair. The donor and the foundation may stipulate conditions for the use of the money, but the seminary trustees may refuse the gift.

The foundation can also receive designated gifts for general operational expenses and student scholarships.

There is also a provision in the articles of incorporation that upon decision of the board of directors (a majority which must be alumni of SBTS) if SBTS has departed from its 125-year heritage, the endowment monies may be given to some other institution for the education of men and women for Baptist ministry.

Because the actions of a growing number of the seminary's trustees indicate a desire to move SBTS away from its historic heritage and mission, this foundation may offer a more desirable path for support of our mother seminary. More information may be received by writing Alumni and Friends of Theological Education, c/o H. Stephen Shoemaker, 2800 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206.

## Baptist Record resolution

Editor:

I am writing to state that the First Baptist Church of Stonewall supports the resolution adopted by the Clarke County Baptist Association Executive Committee concerning bias reporting by the *Baptist Record*. In fact, First Baptist Stonewall passed and sent to the *Baptist Record* Editor a similar resolution. This also was a unanimous vote. Unanimous meaning those present and voting. The vote was by a show of hands. Does standing for a vote make the vote any stronger than a show of hands?

The vote by the Clarke County Baptist Executive Committee was a unanimous vote. Again unanimous meaning those present and voting. This vote was by a show of hands. The Executive Committee was not seeking to speak for any church or pastor. It was simply an expression of belief by those present and voting.

Had those with an opposing view been present they certainly could have expressed their opposition to the resolution and voted as they chose. Isn't a vote always an expression of those present and voting?

Albert McMullen, pastor  
First Baptist, Stonewall

## Correction

Clark Hensley's name was incorrectly stated in "Letters to the Editor" last week. It should have been J. Clark Hensley instead of L. Clark Hensley.

# Radio-Television approves \$8.9 million budget for '90-'91

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission trustees, holding their fall meeting in Fort Worth, approved an \$8.9 million operating budget for the 1990-91 fiscal year — an \$800,000 increase over the 1989-90 budget.

RTVC President Jack B. Johnson and trustees expressed concern about stability of Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program, the denomination's unified budget that finances the convention's missionary and education endeavors.

Trustees adopted a resolution encouraging each state convention to continue to utilize the Cooperative Program as the primary means of support for missions at home and around the world and encouraging local churches to give regularly a portion of their undesignated income to missions through the Cooperative Program.

The concern over the Cooperative Program's stability stems from the fact that the moderate-conservative controversy that has led some moderates, including about 3,000 who met last month in Atlanta, to consider new funding mechanisms that would bypass the Cooperative Program to support Baptist agencies and institutions.

Sixty percent of the RTVC's funding

comes through the Cooperative Program, with the second largest amount — 22 percent — coming from advertising on the RTVC-owned American Christian Television System (ACTS) network, executive vice president Richard T. McCartney, who made the budget presentation, told trustees.

The remainder comes from gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations. The RTVC makes no appeals for funds on any of its radio or television programs.

Trustees approved a year-long capital fund-raising campaign for the Fort Worth area, with a goal of \$1 million to \$1.5 million. Cargill and Associates of Fort Worth was employed as consultant. Trustees at their April meeting had employed Cargill and Associates to test the feasibility of such a campaign in Fort Worth. Funds raised in the campaign will be used to purchase field and studio production equipment, update the commission's computer systems, fund endowment and refurbish the building.

Trustees approved a resolution stating that an investigation indicated the commission has not been used to support either side of the current controversy in the SBC and resolving to inform all employees that such action by any employee is forbidden.

Interviewed by a local reporter following the trustees' meeting, President Jack Johnson said that if someone were to try to force him to take sides, "I would consider that not proper."

Johnson, who resigned as executive director of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention to become head of the RTVC, said his job is to shun politics and concentrate on expanding the Baptist satellite network, which he said is in its best financial condition in many years.

Nearly \$600,000 of the \$800,000 increase is expected to result in expansion of the commission's television delivery system and the ACTS network and to enhance the outreach of ACTS with new programming, according to Johnson.

The RTVC debt retirement is ahead of schedule and will require less than 20 percent of the new budget, Johnson reported to the trustees. He also announced no allocation to the agency's contingency reserve fund is included in the budget since the reserve has reached the \$500,000 goal previously set by trustees.

Trustees set Jan. 14 — during their next meeting — as the date for Johnson's formal installation as commission president.

# capsules

## HMB recycles

ATLANTA (BP) — In the first four months of a new recycling program, Home Mission Board employees saved almost 150 trees, 2,100 gallons of fuel, and 41 cubic yards of landfill space, president Larry Lewis said.

"The Home Mission Board should be a leader in our concern regarding environmental problems and disposal of waste," said Lewis. "These are pertinent issues and will become even more so in the future."

The program concentrates on the disposal of white paper, computer paper and aluminum cans. Special collection bins are provided on every floor of the HMB's Atlanta headquarters. A private firm, contracted to analyze the HMB facility and set up a workable system, is responsible for maintaining the bins and taking away the collected goods.

Lewis said he hopes other SBC agencies will begin similar programs. "We must find more ways to be good stewards of God's precious gift, our planet," he said.

## Davis withdraws acceptance of presidency

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) — Citing an "inability to find peace in the division," M. Vernon Davis has withdrawn his earlier acceptance of the presidency of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

Davis, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., had agreed in mid-September to become BTSR's first president after a unanimous call from the fledgling institution's presidential search committee and full board of trustees. Davis was interviewed for the position Aug. 29 and accepted the trustees' invitation to become president two weeks later.

But in a letter dated Sept. 27 sent to the trustees, Davis wrote: "I'm making my positive response... I anticipated that a sense of joy and freedom would be mine as I began to shift gears and think toward our shared future there. To my surprise this has not come. The decision to go to Richmond did not make the decision to leave Midwestern easier."

Creation of BTSR was authorized in March 1989 at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Alliance, the school's sponsoring body.

## BJC elects Chesson

WASHINGTON (ABP) — Larry G. Chesson, city editor of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, Ark., has been elected director of information services for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Chesson, 42, a former staffer of the BJC, was elected during the Oct. 1 meeting of the BJC in Washington.

He will assume a post vacated by Kathy Palen, who resigned in August to attend Yale Divinity School.

He also will assume some responsibilities of Victor Tupitz, 64, who announced his retirement as director of denominational relations during the Oct. 1 meeting.

Chesson, a native of Arkansas, was information associate and correspondent for the Washington Bureau of Baptist Press from 1980-85. Since 1985, he has been news editor and city editor of the daily newspaper in central Arkansas.

Previously, he was news director at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; in real estate; and sports reporter and editor in Conway and for the Arkansas Democrat in Little Rock.

He is an ordained Baptist minister and graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., and Southern Seminary.

In his new responsibilities, to begin about Dec. 1, Chesson will be responsible for news and information services for the BJC, as well as being editor of Report from the Capital, the committee's monthly newsmagazine.

Tupitz, who has been with the BJC since 1979, will continue to work with the committee on special projects.

## HMB introduces new evangelism emphasis

ATLANTA (BP) — Evangelism should not be an independent program but a continuous process within the life of a church, according to Darrell Robinson, vice president for evangelism for the Home Mission Board. Robinson introduced "Total Church Life" as the HMB's overall emphasis on evangelism Sept. 20-22 during a National Soul-Winning Conference in Atlanta.

Total Church Life is a "growth without gimmicks approach," Robinson said. "It's more than a one-time program. I'm talking about a continuous process."

"You don't bring life through a program," he said. "You can take any evangelistic program we have at the Home Mission Board and superimpose it on a dead church and you'll still have a dead church."

Robinson called for the church to reclaim a holistic approach to ministry rather than focusing only on one aspect of ministry. "Evangelism is the consequence of the church being the church," he said.

The Total Church Life seminar, which will be taught across the United States, is based on Robinson's book of the same title.

# "Hear ye! Drama festival coming!"



NASHVILLE — The first national festival for Christians interested in drama, puppetry, and clowning will be held Nov. 9-11 in Nashville.

More than 1,000 participants are expected to attend the festival, "Celebrating Christ Through the Arts," at Two Rivers Church near Opryland USA in Nashville, according to Ev Robertson, senior drama specialist in the Sunday School Board's church recreation department.

The festival will include more than 100 conferences and workshops on drama, puppetry, and clowning; showcase performances by professional and semi-professional Christian artists; and group performances by troupes from the United States, Canada, and England, he said.

Bible study and worship or celebra-

tion times are also scheduled throughout the three-day festival.

A directors' symposium and a writers' symposium, "The Arts and Ministry in the 90s," will be held simultaneously on Friday, Nov. 9.

"The directors' symposium will focus on the current renaissance in the arts," Robertson said. "Rapidly increasing opportunities for the arts

in ministry will be pinpointed."

The writers' symposium will focus on new trends in communications in the 90s and challenges facing Christian drama writers, Robertson said.

Bill Hendricks, professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Jeannette Clift George, an actress, playwright, and director from Houston, will be among the symposium leaders.

# WMU reorganizes to lead SBC through "new era in missions"

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union has reorganized to lead the organization through "a whole new era of missions involvement," according to one of the national executives.

The reorganization targets the entire church, Baptist associations and age-level WMU organizations as major focus areas for the decade of the '90s.

"These are new days, and we need

to seek innovative ways for keeping the global mandate alive in the hearts of every Southern Baptist," said Dellanna O'Brien, national WMU executive director. "We hope we will better be able to do this through reorganization and new focus."

Woman's Missionary Union has identified three strategic directions for this decade. The first strategy calls for WMU to be a missions force

in the church, association, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Under the reorganization, three new sections in the missions program system will replace the current publications section and interpretation section. The missions program system is the WMU division charged with the responsibility for field services, publications, programming, and language work.

The new sections are the age-level

involvement section, the churchwide involvement section and the associational relations unit.

Bobbie Sorrill, associate executive director of the missions program system, directs the work of the system in addition to overseeing the work of the associational relations unit.

Lynn Yarbrough will oversee the churchwide involvement section, which will provide field servicing and magazine and product production for WMU age-level organizations.

churchwide audiences. The staff also will target special groups such as black and language churches, families, seminary students, ministers' wives, church staff members and women's ministries programs.

Betty Merrell will direct the work of the age-level involvement section, which will include field servicing and magazine and product production for WMU age-level organizations.

Alumni officers ask:

## "Rescind new guidelines"

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Southern Seminary's National Alumni Association officers have called on the school's trustees to rescind new employment guidelines adopted for seminary faculty.

In a "Statement of Concern" issued Sept. 28 following a meeting of national alumni officers on the Louisville, Ky., seminary's campus, alumni association leaders said they "fear" the trustees' addition of the 1987 Peace Committee report as a theological guideline for faculty personnel decisions is "another step toward creedalism." They said this is "the first time that specific interpretations of God's Holy Word have been required of any Southern Baptist educational institution."

The statement was signed by alumni association president Bobby S. Terry, editor of *Word & Way*, news-journal of the Missouri Baptist Convention; immediate past president Floyd F. Roebuck, pastor of First Church of Rome, Ga.; and president-elect Emmanuel L. McCall, director of the Home Mission Board's black church extension division.

Alumni officers pointed out that traditionally Baptists have resisted creeds. "Historically, Baptists have refused to have any creed but the Bible," the statement said. "We have refused to elevate man's words above God's word. The trustees have gone farther than the Peace Committee or the Southern Baptist Convention was willing to go."

At a called meeting Sept. 24, seminary trustees voted 36 to 14 to add the 1987 Southern Baptist Peace Committee report as a guideline for hiring, promoting and granting tenure to seminary faculty.

## Suit project gets underway

The annual Mississippi Baptist Suit Project is underway for 1990.

This project, in existence for 26 years, provides a new suit of clothes for pastors in pioneer areas of the Southern Baptist Convention.

This year, suits will be provided for pastors in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana. This will be a total of 138 suits.

Over the years since 1963, Mississippi Baptists have provided more than 2,639 suits to pioneer pastors. The project is sponsored by the Brotherhood Department.

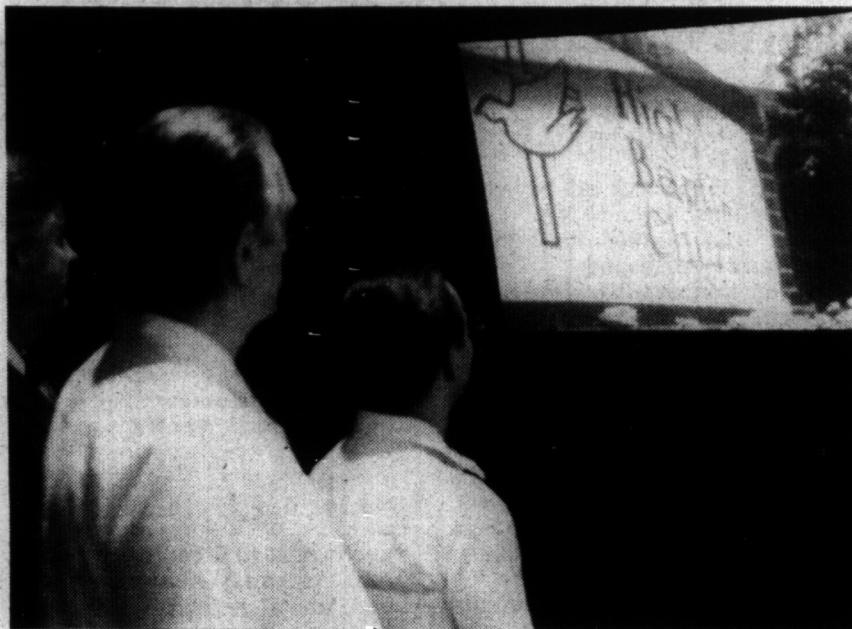
Cost is \$130 per suit. They are mailed so that the pastors will have them before Christmas.

Church groups and individuals can send their gifts payable to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Attention: Brotherhood Department, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Designate on each check: Suit Project.

## AFA promotes Burger King boycott

The American Family Association says it has mailed two million "Boycott Burger King" action packs promoting a boycott of the fast food chain. The action is the first in a series of efforts the group will use to promote the boycott. AFA says it expects to spend more than \$1 million promoting the boycott.

AFA mailed the action packs to help promote the boycott called by Chris-



## Video focuses on inner city church

Farrell Blankenship, Richard Brogan, and Cliff Shipp are watching a newly produced video which tells the story of an inner city church that is ministering in its setting. The 17-minute video, initiated by the Cooperative Missions Department, tells the history of Highland Church in Jackson. The church has maintained a thriving ministry to senior citizens and special education persons in their changing community. The video was produced by the Department of Broadcast Services in cooperation with Grayson Family Productions, Inc., Brandon. Cliff Shipp is pastor of Highland Church, Blankenship directs Broadcast Services, and Brogan is a consultant in the Cooperative Missions Department. Churches and individuals interested in transitional communities and who would like to view the video may contact the Cooperative Missions Department.

## State WMU sends Bible to president of Equatorial Guinea

Charles and Indy Whitten, retired Southern Baptist missionaries, will on Nov. 18 help to dedicate the building for a church they started in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, West Africa. Also the two, who now live in Clinton, expect to present to the president of Equatorial Guinea a Bible bought by the Woman's Missionary Union of Mississippi.

Before retirement, the Whittens served 40 years in Argentina, Spain, and Equatorial Guinea. During their three years in the West African country, they began a church in Malabo, in rented quarters.

Now the Malabo Baptist Church's first building will be officially inaugurated on Nov. 18. The Foreign Mission Board, SBC, invited the Whittens to return for the special service. They will spend three weeks in Equatorial Guinea.

Other missionaries in Equatorial Guinea asked them to obtain the most "special" Bible in Spanish that they could find and have the cover engraved (with the president's name) to present to the president of Equatorial Guinea. They are taking a Bible they bought from the Spanish Baptist Publishing House in El Paso, the latest Spanish translation, completed last year.

Mississippi Baptist women and girls paid for the Bible through the Edwin Robinson WMU Special Day Offering. Marjean Patterson, executive director, Mississippi WMU, said, "I hope the Bible is a means to the salvation of many people in

Equatorial Guinea."

The Whittens are to leave the USA on Oct. 22 for Spain and Equatorial Guinea.

My interest is in the future because I'm going to spend the rest of my life there. — Charles Kettering

## Disaster Relief gets

The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Unit has a new tractor to pull it. It is a 1984 International Tractor with a 400 Cummins engine. It is painted white and is a cab-over vehicle, able to pull the 50-foot disaster unit.

The purchase was approved by the MBCB Executive Committee at a cost

## Devotional Angels

By Troy B. Land

Even Satan, when he would make attempt to comfort our Lord, was obviously shy except when he would resort to the Scripture. His favorite seemed to be Psa. 91:11-12: "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." He used it in the so-called "temptation of Christ." Since even Satan acknowledged the glorious provision of our Lord in the angels, it most assuredly should be a heavenly benediction to God's children.

"How oft do their silver bowers leave  
To come to succor us that succor want!  
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave,  
The flitting skies  
Like flying pursuivant  
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!  
They for us fight, that watch and duly ward,  
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;  
And all for love and nothing for reward.  
Oh, why should heavenly God to man have such regard!



(Edmund Spenser, 1552-1599)

It is immeasurably assuring to know that one angel enabled with the power and glory of our Lord is far stronger than any whole nation! Earthly rulers are subject to unnumbered changes and great uncertainties. The reason for that is that enemies may kill their sentries and may buy off, or otherwise, corrupt their protectors. But no man or kingdom is able to touch the angels of God.

A second surety of our care at angels' hands is, that the charge of us, is given to those ministering spirits, not in gross, not in a lump form, but divided into parcels: names as in a book, and our hair by numbers. "He keepeth all his bones . . ." (Psa. 34:20). They keep our very foot, putting it in security. (Psa. 91:12)

These messengers of God are assigned to keep us in all our ways. When out of the way it is their charge to oppose us, in order to assure our walking in the right way. This is no more a terror to the ungodly than it is a comfort to the righteous. If an angel would tend to minimize the sinfulness of Balaam, how much more careful are all those glorious messengers of God to attempt to prevent the wayward steps of God's children?

Myriad are the falls and bruises the angels of God have kept us from! In how many inclinations to wrong have they come to us to wave a hand of considerate caution. Often have they shored us up through either removing the occasion of temptation or by casting in good motions and better ideas.

We sin awesomely too frequently and would suffer far more falls than we do if those holy messengers did not buoy us up.

Samuel Slater, who died almost 300 years ago, wrote concerning being kept by the angels "in the way": "Their commission, large as it is, reaches no further: when you leave that, you lose your guard; but while you keep your way, angels, yea, the God of angels, will keep you. Do not so much fear losing your estate or your liberty, or your life, as losing your way, and leaving your way; nothing but sin exposeth you to misery. So long as you keep your way, you shall keep other things; or if you lose any of them, you shall get what is better: though you may suffer Christ, you shall not be losers by him."

Land is pastor, Trinity Church, West Point.

## new tractor, able to pull unit

of \$14,000. Drivers Bill Purvis, Garvin Herrington, and Harry Boozer aided in the choosing of the tractor. Volunteer James Smith is currently installing dome lights and radios.

The unit's trailer is being taken to Marion County where volunteers Glenn Nace and William Wright will do some mechanical and construction

repairs.

Paul Harrell and Jim Didlake, of the Brotherhood Department, which oversees disaster relief work in Mississippi for Baptists, report they will be contacting directors of missions with information on disaster preparedness, focusing on earthquakes.

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## Board will study Baylor action

DALLAS, (ABP) — The administrative committee of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board on Oct. 2 voted to recommend to the board a formal study of recent action by Baylor University Board of Trustees that put distance between the school and BGCT control.

The committee will recommend to the Executive Board a "formal study of legal, relational, and financial aspects of the Baylor charter action" to determine options available to the Texas convention. The committee authorized up to \$30,000 from contingency funds for the study.

At the called meeting, the administrative committee also voted escrow Cooperative Program funds due to be sent to Baylor until a convention study of the funding matter is completed.

The committee stipulated in its motion that escrowing the funds "is not intended to be judgmental or punitive toward Baylor" and that study of the funding matter should be completed as soon as possible.

Baylor trustees had voted 30-7 on

Sept. 21 to change the charter and remove the school from direct control of the BGCT. Previously, Baylor University, located in Waco, Texas, has been governed by a 48-member board of trustees elected by the BGCT. Under the revised charter, sole governance of the university will be granted to a 24-member board of regents, one-fourth of whom will be chosen by trustees elected by the BGCT, with the remainder selected by the regents themselves.

Baylor President Herbert H. Reynolds said the action was in response to a perceived threat of a "fundamentalist" takeover and distrust created by 12 years of controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention.

The committee also voted that the proposed 1991 BGCT Cooperative Program budget be presented as previously approved by the Executive Board to the annual meeting of the BGCT in Houston, Nov. 13-14, subject to revision following the convention study of the funding. Baylor would receive \$6,048,291 from Texas Baptists.

# Names in the news



**Raymond Church, Raymond**, recently honored **Grady Sheffield**, deacon for 42 years and a member for 52 years. He served as Sunday School superintendent for many years and has been helpful in leading the church with its deacon family ministry. His son, Bob, is a consultant with the Sunday School Board in Nashville, in the area of deacon ministry. Pictured, Tommy Jarrett, pastor, presents plaque to Sheffield.

**Candace Boyd** has been appointed Baptist Student Union director at William Carey College, Hattiesburg campus, effective immediately. Boyd holds the bachelor of science in nursing from Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, La., and a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Seminary.

She has served as assistant BSU director in Aurora, Colo., special activities coordinator at Glorieta, and on the staff of Birchman Church, Fort Worth, Texas. During 1987, she signed with the Foreign Mission Board in the Gaza Strip.

**Richard Brogan**, consultant in the Cooperative Missions Department, will be representing the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and the Home Mission Board in 10 churches in the Tanana Valley Baptist Association, Fairbanks, Alaska, Oct. 21-28. Brogan will be speaking in these churches during a World Missions Conference there.

New Hope Church awarded Sunday School Perfect Attendance pins Sept. 30 to the following members: Ashley Hillman, one year; David Pickel, one year; Jamie Pickel, two years; Linda Pickel, two years; Gary Ann Moore, three years; Donna Moore, five years; Amanda Moore, 13 years.

DALLAS, Oct. 3 (BP) — Shuichi Matsumura, former president of the Japan Baptist Convention who helped lead the Japan Baptist New Life Movement involving hundreds of Texas Baptist volunteers in 1963, died in Tokyo Sept. 28. He was 74.

The Tokiwadai Baptist Church, which Matsumura began in Tokyo in 1949, grew into the largest congregation in Japan through emphasis on Sunday School, home meetings and kindergarten. About 24 members of the church became Baptist pastors.

While Matsumura was president of the convention, Japanese Baptists sent out their first foreign missionaries.

He also taught at Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka.

**Zachary Taylor Hederman**, a 1935 bachelor of arts graduate of Mississippi College, will be honored as alumnus of the year by the National Alumni Association, Oct. 20 for his "devotion to the college in many ways and his service to church and community."



**SHAWNEE, Okla. (ABP)** — Bob R. Agee, president of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, has been diagnosed as having a rare but treatable form of leukemia. Specialists at Baptist Medical Center in Oklahoma City have told the president the disease is incurable, but not immediately life-threatening.

**Lonnie J. Case** was ordained to the ministry by Pearlhaven Church, Brookhaven. The ceremony held on July 29 was conducted by Jimmy Yarbrough and Bob Shepherd. Others participating were Homer Case, Lonnie's father, and his brother, Leonard Case. The church called Case as pastor in July 1990.

## New BSU director at Clarke College

Lawrence White assumed duties as BSU Director at Clarke College, Sept. 1, filling the position vacated by J. B. Costilow.

Lawrence is a graduate of East Central Community College and MC with a bachelor's degree in voice. Before coming to Clarke, White held positions as minister of music and youth at Raymond Church and Highland Church, Jackson. He is the son of Vernon and Catherine White of Philadelphia.

## Revival dates

**Macedonia Church, Meridian (Lauderdale)**: Oct. 26-28; services, Fri. and Sat., 7:30 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Harold T. Bryson, NOBTS, evangelist; Danny Moss, pastor.

**Oral Church, Sumrall (Lamar)**: Oct. 21-24; Sun., 11 a.m., Jerry Rawls, New Life Church pastor; Sun., 7 p.m., Dale Saucier, Carnes Church pastor; Mon.-Wed., services 7 p.m. nightly; Acker Smith, director of music; Billy Barrett, pastor.

**Lowrey Memorial Church, Blue Mountain**: Oct. 21-25; Randy Bostick, pastor, Oakland Church, Corinth, evangelist; Leon Enzor, assistant principal of New Albany Middle School, music; James Travis, interim pastor.

## SS to sponsor growth conferences

Help is coming for those working in the three fastest growing areas of Sunday School ministry.

Growth conferences will be held in four locations, Oct. 29-Nov. 1, for workers with Cradle Roll, Single Adults, and Homebound.

The conferences will be held Oct. 29 at North Oxford Church, Oxford, 7-9:30 p.m.; Oct. 30 at First Church, Starkville, 7-9:30 p.m.; Oct. 31 at First Church, Clinton, 9:30 a.m.-noon; and Nov. 1 at First Church, Hattiesburg, 7-9:30 p.m.

Conference leader for the Cradle Roll portion of the conferences will be Linda Reeves, consultant in the Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Steve Street, minister of single adults at Broadmoor Church, Jackson, will be the conference leader for the sessions on Single Adults.

And Keith Williams, Sunday School Department consultant, will lead sessions on Homebound persons.

## Missionary news

**Elton and Dottie Gray**, missionaries to Japan, are on the field (address: P. O. Box 31, Koza City, Okinawa 904, Japan). He is a native of Loretto, Tenn., and she is the former Dottie Eavenson of Marks, Miss.

**Curtis and Deanie Ferrell**, missionaries to Ecuador, are on the field (address: Apartado 21-162, Sucursal Eloy Alfaro, Quito, Ecuador). He was born in Montgomery, Ala., and grew up in Argentina, where his parents were Southern Baptist missionaries. She is the former Deanie Bolls of Jackson.

**Doug Kellum**, missionary to the Philippines, is on the field (address: Box 7635, Airmail Distribution Center, NAIA, Pasay City 1300, Philippines). A native of Mississippi, he was born in Clarksdale and grew up in Tutwiler.

**Stephen and Joy Sanders**, missionaries to Indonesia, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: Trompolos 1077, Jakarta Pusat 10010, Indonesia). Son of Southern Baptist missionaries, he was born in Lufkin, Texas, grew up in Indonesia, and considers Tulsa, Okla., his hometown. The former Joy Sweet, daughter of missionaries, she was born in West Point and considers Tulsa her hometown.

**James and Gwen Young**, missionaries to Bangladesh, are on the field (address: P. O. Box 99, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh). They are natives of Mississippi. He is from Thomastown, and she is the former Gwen Jenkins of Kosciusko.

## Homecomings

**Chunky Church (Newton)**: Oct. 21; services, 11 a.m.; dinner in family life building at noon; singing, 1:45 p.m.; no night services; C. C. Cornelius, Brandon, guest speaker; The Ridgeways, guest singers; Wayne Campbell, pastor.

**Jayess Church, Jayess (Lawrence)**: Oct. 21; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner, noon; singing, 1:30 p.m.; Floyd Beeson, guest speaker; Raymond Jeffcoat, pastor.

**Piave Church, Richton**: Oct. 21; morning and afternoon services; lunch at church; Delton Beall, pastor, First Church, Forrest City, Ark., speaker.

## Senior Adult Corner



The New Hope Senior Singers are pictured above at a performance they gave recently, New Hope Church, Lauderdale Association.

## Gulledge authors senior adult book

A book introduced at the Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Autumn Fest for Senior Adults this week is entitled,

**Bind Us Together — The Church and Older Members**. It was written by Pat H. Gulledge of Grenada.

In announcing the book, J. Clark Hensley, Mississippi contract worker with senior adults, stated that it was one of the finest

books on the creating of awareness of the need of churches working with senior adults to the end of their days that he had ever read.

**Bind Us Together** is the theme book for the Senior Adult Autumn Fest and

will also be a theme book for one of the retreats next spring.

**Gulledge** is a native of Walthall County, and a graduate of Southwestern Seminary. He has worked in religious education in churches in Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee. Since 1955 the Gulledge family has lived in Grenada, where he combines farming and church work as a vocation.

A few years ago the Gulledges put most of their estate in trust for the Southwestern Seminary to use in the teaching of gerontology to ministerial students. The book may be obtained from the Baptist Book Store at Gulfshore or in Jackson or from the Family Ministry Section, Discipleship Training Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

## McLaurin Heights, Pearl, will celebrate 30th anniversary

McLaurin Heights Church, Pearl, will celebrate its 30th anniversary, Oct. 21. Morning worship service will begin at 10:50 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds at noon in the fellowship hall. A Sunday School class will be led by John Patterson, minister of education, 9:45 a.m., in the auditorium.

J. Clark Hensley was instrumental in organizing the mission church, which first met in the Kiddie Kollege in 1960. Ernest Clegg, who is deceased,

served as the first pastor of the church. Former pastors who will participate in the celebration are J. C. Renfroe, Eugene H. Dobbs, and Curtis Williams.

A display of pictures and memorabilia will be available for viewing in the room behind the auditorium. The **Enduring Vision**, church history book, written by Robin Miles, will be available for \$3 per copy. Jack Albritton is pastor.

## Staff changes

**West McComb Church, Pike Association**, has called Curtis Hatcher as minister of music and youth, effective Oct. 14. He is a native of Ohio and received his education at Mississippi College. He previously served Richland Church, Richland.

**Hepzibah Church, Silver Creek (Lawrence)** has called Jimmy T. Smith Jr. as pastor, effective Sept. 30. The Lanett, Ala. native previously served at Spring Hill Church, Waterford. Smith received his associate degree from Southern Union State Junior College in Wadley, Ala.

**Dry Creek Church, Florence**, has called Susan Clark of Jackson as interim minister of music, effective Sept. 23. She previously served Oakdale Church, Brandon, and Eastside Church, Pearl. Clark received her education at Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary. She serves as a contract consultant for the Church Music Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

**Bobby Barfoot** has been called as full-time pastor, New Hope Church, Leake Association, effective Sept. 23. Barfoot has served as interim pastor at New Hope for the past 14 months.

**New Hope Church, Meridian (Lauderdale)** has called Cheryl Ann Whitehead of Meridian as minister of music, effective Oct. 7. Whitehead received her bachelor of music from Mississippi College, and previously served at Mt. Vernon Church, Meridian. She replaces Penny McLemore, who resigned Sept. 2 to accept a teaching position. McLemore is available in Meridian to accept supply and solo work.

## Revival results

**Summerland Church, Taylorsville (Jones)**: Aug. 19-22; Scott Palmer of Wesson, preacher; music, Jim Holson, Wesson; one profession of faith; David Kendrick is pastor.

**Liberty Church, Noxapater (Winston)**: Aug. 12-15; Jimmy Nettles of Ft. Worth, Texas, preacher; music, Doug Hubbard of Noxapater; 19 professions of faith; Bobby parish is pastor.

**Woolmarket Church, Biloxi (Gulf Coast)**: Sept. 9-13; Scott Camp of Del City, Okla., preaching; music by Scott and Gina Camp, Gary Robinson; 170 professions of faith; M. L. Falter, pastor.

# Just for the Record



**Sallis Church**, Attala Association, celebrated its 150th anniversary, Sept. 16. Three hundred people gathered for the homecoming, with music by Robby Robertson and Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie Ables. Former pastor Kenneth Moore gave the message. An offering of \$2800 was collected for the organ fund. Pictured, left to right, are former pastors Kenneth Moore, Thomas Wicker, J. M. Purl, Lynn Marshall, and Doyle Shirley, and current pastor Brian Horton.



**Macedonia Church, Lebanon Association**, held its first children's camp this summer. Forty-five children, 26 adults and youth workers attended the three-day camp. Five children

made professions of faith. R. L. Hullum is minister of music, and Jerry Doggett is pastor.



On Sept. 23, Roseland Park Church, Picayune, held a dedication service and ribbon cutting ceremony for its new building. The 15,000 sq. ft. facility includes an administrative suite, adult education areas, library, fellowship hall and kitchen, materials office and a lobby-welcome center.

Pictured, left to right, are Frank Nix, minister of music/youth at Roseland Park, James Roberts, site superintendent for Brackley Construction Company, New Orleans, Reggie Hanberry, chairman of the building committee, Eddie Hamilton, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, James Spencer, pastor, Roseland Park, Alan Blount, minister of education/special activities at Roseland Park, and A. R. Sumrall, chairman of deacons at Roseland Park.



The youth of Enterprise Church went to Bryson City, N. C., in August and worked with missionary Jim Dean in resort ministry. The group led family evening worship services in a different resort campground every night for a week. Services were planned and conducted by the youth and included music, testimonies, puppets, and drama. Approximately 175 campers worshiped with the youth.

Those making the trip are pictured, back row, left to right, Vanessa Purvis, Betty Purvis, Beth Rolison, Bobby Purvis, Amy Boggan, Tracey Melton and Philip Nelson; middle, Amy Moore, Sandra Herrington, Leslie Melton, Robin Lindsey, Heather Bullock, Stacy Covington and Water Temple; front, Paul Woolery, summer youth worker, and Danny Bullock, pastor.



Acteens of First Church, Collinsville, welcomed new members recently with a reception and skit. Marie Hinson and Diane White are Acteens leaders. David L. Sellers is pastor.

## Off the Record

When a man begins to realize the truth about himself, it reduces his desire to reform his neighbors.

## Johnson named office manager of new funding organization

ATLANTA (BP) — Hettie Johnson has been named office manager for Baptist Cooperative Missions Program, Inc., the alternate funding mechanism for Southern Baptist mission support, created in Atlanta in August.

Johnson retired in 1981 after 13 years as director of the business services division of the Home Mission Board. Earlier, she was administrative assistant for Georgia Baptist Woman's Missionary Union for six years.

BCMP is related to "The Fellowship," the group coalition of moderate Southern Baptists who met in Atlanta in August to talk about how to continue support of Southern Baptist mission causes without abiding by new features of the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget, as drafted by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

Grady Cothen, chairman of the BCMP trustees and president of the corporation, said: "BCMP began funds as of Oct. 1. Individuals or churches wishing to designate funds will have their wishes followed to the penny. Our corporation is in the process of getting full tax-exempt status with

Internal Revenue Service. Until that time, individual contributions may be sent through local churches to secure tax credit. Churches may then forward funds to BCMP."

In designing man's hinges, the Creator knew he would have little occasion to pat himself on the back. — Anahgram

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# A comforting sign that God is with us

By Bob Rogers  
Isaiah 7:1-4, 10-17

We are in a time of uncertainty. Thousands of our young men and women are in the Mideast. Yellow ribbons are everywhere. The price of gasoline is rising to new heights, upsetting our economy. People are worried about the future. In a time such as this, we need a word of assurance from God. We get that assurance in Isaiah's message to Ahaz in this Sunday's lesson, Isaiah 7:1-4, 10-17.

Four nations played a role in the drama of this week's lesson: Judah, Israel, Syria, and Assyria. On a map of the Mideast, Judah was in the southern part of what is now Israel. Syria was northeast of Israel; Assyria was northeast of Syria, in northern Mesopotamia (now northern Iraq).

Verses 1-2 explain the political problem Ahaz had. King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah of Israel (Israel is also referred to as "Ephraim") were allied together against King Ahaz of Judah. Why? Syria and Israel were rebelling against the powerful Assyrians, and Judah had refused to join the rebellion, so Syria and Israel



Rogers

## UNIFORM

were trying to force Judah to join their rebellion.

Ahaz had enough political sense to know that Assyria could not be defeated, and he preferred to remain neutral. But with the threat from Israel and Syria, he was considering an alliance with Assyria for protection. The Lord told Isaiah to show Ahaz that he should put his hope in God, not in political alliances. "Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son" (vs. 3). The name of Isaiah's son meant "a remnant shall return." This name, which was the basis of the prophecy in Isaiah 10:20-22, was a reminder that although many of God's people might desert him, there would always be a remnant who would remain faithful. Verse 4 repeats four phrases to calm Ahaz's anxiety: "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted." There was no reason to fear Rezin of Syria or "the son of Remaliah" (Pekah of Israel), for their anger was merely "two tails of these . . . smoking firebrands" (vs. 4). According to verse 6, Pekah and Rezin were trying to overthrow Ahaz and replace him with "the son of Tabeal," but the coup would fail, and the

Syrians and Israelites would be destroyed by Assyria.

As a further assurance, the Lord offered Ahaz a sign to verify the prophecy (vss. 10-11), although he tried to appear pious by refusing to hear it, which was really his way of trying to avoid listening to God (vss. 12-13). Thus the Lord gave the sign: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (vs. 14). "Immanuel" meant "God is with us," so the sign was a comforting message that in the midst of trouble God is present.

This sign had a double meaning: one for Ahaz then, and one for the future Messiah. The word translated "virgin" in verse 14 is almah, which could mean a virgin or could simply mean "young woman." The Hebrew word for "virgin" was bethulah. The beauty of almah was that it allowed God's inspired word to have both meanings at once. With reference to Ahaz's day, almah meant a young woman (probably Isaiah's wife) would have a child. By the time the child would be eating solid foods such as "butter and honey" (vs. 15), but "before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings" (vs. 16). In other words, the baby born to Isaiah's wife would serve as a sign that God was with Judah,

because by the time the boy was a few years old, King Rezin and King Pekah would no longer be a threat. This was exactly what happened. Yet for Christians today, there is a second, more important meaning.

The second meaning of almah in verse 14 was a reference to the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:23 quotes Isaiah 7:14 as a prophecy of Jesus, and Matthew used the Greek word parthenos, which meant "virgin." The Revised Standard Version, Good News Bible, and New English Bible all translate parthenos as "virgin" in Matthew 1:23, even though they translate almah as "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14. God's word is clear that almah should be understood as "virgin" with reference to the second meaning, the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ, who was "Immanuel," God with us in the flesh. The ultimate hope for our world is not in political alliances or military might. Our only hope is in Christ, who is "God with us." You can know this assurance by placing your trust in him. If you have already trusted him, then you can depend on him to live day by day, no matter what troubles you face.

- Questions to consider:
1. What uncertainties do you face right now?
  2. In what ways can Christians experience God's presence in the midst of turmoil?

Rogers is pastor, Calvary Church, Gloster.

# God's presence and power overcome weakness

By Jim Smith  
Exodus 3:11-4:9

When we are aware of our own shortcomings, unworthiness, and limitations, it is often easy to convince ourselves that God is also limited in his abilities. Moses, the reluctant witness, discovers the power of God through realizing his own weakness. Join me as we consider this week's scripture passage.

We open with Moses' questioning his own abilities, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" He is really saying something to the effect of, "God, I know that I am just an humble shepherd and a 'wanted man' in Egypt. I can't go before Pharaoh because he would put me to death; and, besides, I know your people will not listen to me anyway."

Moses, like many of us, never got past the personal pronoun I. As long as we trust in our



Smith

## LIFE AND WORK

power and not in God's power, we are correct to assume there is little we can do. The challenge for the Christian is to allow God to operate through us and thereby provide the power necessary to make any task possible.

It would be easy to say that this reluctance on the part of Moses is unique to him and his situation. However, if you have ever served on a nominating committee in any church, you have encountered many reluctant servants exhibiting lack of confidence, negative self-evaluation, and often simple excuses for avoiding God's service.

God was quick to assure Moses that he would be with him. It is not the ability that we have that makes us strong and unable by God, but it is the power of God. Moses' confidence should have been bolstered by the voice of his God who spoke to him from a bush, engulfed with flame but not consumed. Moses, however, came back with another question: God, what makes you think that the folks back home are going to believe me when I tell them that you sent me?

I mean, what name do you want me to use anyway? Who are you, how will they know who you are? God's response is quick and sure once again. "I AM THAT I AM: . . . I AM hath sent me unto you."

God is God! He is beyond our ability to understand or comprehend. He is the one God who always was, who always is, and who always will be. He sent his servant, Moses, he sends his servants today; and he empowers them to accomplish his purpose.

Moses faced an unknown situation; the unknown breeds fear. It produced fear in Moses; it produces fear in men today. It doesn't make any difference if the door you knock upon is at the house of the king or the newcomer in the neighborhood, fear must be overcome. God can do it.

God knew the heart of Pharaoh, and shared his knowledge with Moses. God knew the king's pride would keep him from allowing the Israelites to go free. God gave opportunity after opportunity for Pharaoh to yield to his superior power, but he knew that ultimately he would reach down and deliver the children of Israel with his mighty hand. The power of Pharaoh,

the power of any earthly ruler, is insignificant when compared to the power of the God of the universe.

If we compare Exodus 3:18 with 4:1, we see that Moses directly contradicts God. Not only has Moses, the reluctant witness, exhibited fear, disbelief, lack of commitment, and lack of confidence — now in his boldness he contradicts God. We might expect God to have immediately struck him with lightning from heaven, but God in his long-suffering continued to work with Moses. God gave three powerful signs to convince the children of Israel that he had truly sent Moses to lead them to freedom.

Isn't it wonderful that we have such a patient and long-suffering God? I, for one, am thankful that God does not give up as easily as we do; but pursues the lost as well as the instrument he wants to use. He pursues until we submit to his will and direction. God calls men today, even reluctant men, and makes their weaknesses into strengths through his presence and power. Do you know his presence? Do you have his power? If not, yield to him today that your weakness may be made strong in his service.

Smith is pastor, Mt. Gilead Church, Meridian.

# Jesus' baptism, preparation for his ministry

By Lannie Wilbourn  
Luke 3:21-22; 4:1-13

Success is a "heady" kind of experience. Many of us are ill-equipped to handle real success appropriately. John the Baptist was enjoying the success of crowds of people responding to his preaching and being baptized. Jesus' baptism was different from that of the others. It was not based on repentance, for he had no sin. It did mark the beginning of his public ministry and, in that sense, a new life.

Luke shifts the focus of attention from John to Jesus.

It seems the crowds also shifted their attention away from John. As preachers and teachers we should recognize that as our role, also. We are messengers. Jesus is the message, and the focus of our attention should be on him. Our egos will often get in the way as attention shifts away from us.

Luke tells us that the Holy Spirit descended as Jesus was praying. Throughout his gospel, Luke places emphasis on Jesus' prayer life. Luke also states the Holy Spirit was in "bodily form like a dove." The dove is an accepted symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Father's voice also descended for earthly ears to hear his approval of his son's baptism. Thus, the Trinity is involved in the beginning of Jesus' public ministry,



Wilbourn

## BIBLE BOOK

showing approval. Jesus left the scene by the Jordan filled with the Holy Spirit. Certainly, that scene was one of encouragement to continue in his commitment.

I remember well my baptism on a hot Sunday afternoon in Deacon John Tribble's pond. Most of the members of Wayside Church came to see us baptized. That event is embedded in my memory and even now sparks encouragement within me. Baptism is the line of separation between an old life of sin and our new life in Christ. We "go public" with our faith through baptism. By doing so, we also become targets for Satan to strike.

Matthew sets Jesus up for temptation at the end of the 40 days, while he gives it as during the 40 days. The two go writers also reverse the order of the second and third temptations. The main message is that the kingdoms of light and darkness are in conflict. Satan is God's adversary and the attack on Jesus began as soon as his ministry was announced. His method was an old one. First, he questioned Jesus' credibility: "If you are the Son of God, . . ." That is a throwback to his question to Eve, "Did God really say . . ."

Satan's method hasn't changed. He still poses questions about God's credibility in our minds. The tension of temptation is as constant a thing for Christians as it was for Jesus. His victory

helps us to see ours. The writer of Hebrews said Jesus was "tempted in every way, just as we are . . ." (4:15, NIV).

The three temptations cover bread, worship/authority, and trust. The questions are simple. Can God be trusted to provide daily bread? Who really is the authority on life and, therefore, worthy of worship? Is presumption the same as trust?

Satan tempted Jesus in ways we are also tempted. When our basic needs are not met in a timely fashion, do we lose faith in God? Is bread the real issue? Jesus' answer indicated it was not. He quoted only part of Deut. 8:3, "He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." Temptations to our lower needs may carry lessons

for our higher needs.

The kingdoms in conflict are pictured in the second temptation. Which is worthy of worship, earthly power or heavenly power? Jesus said only heavenly power is worthy. The last is a temptation to use presumption rather than faith. Satan misuses the scripture, Psalm 91, by quoting enough to serve his purposes. Any attempt to force God to act is presumption. Claiming a promise requires meeting the conditions of the promise.

Baptism and temptation marked the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. We should learn that Satan hasn't changed. Make a commitment to the Lord and Satan will tempt you soon. But, "we have a high priest who . . . is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray . . ." (Heb. 5:2, NIV).

Wilbourn is pastor, Pinelake Church, Brandon.

## Mississippi Baptist activities

Oct. 21-28	Poverty/Hunger Awareness Week (CAC Emphasis)
Oct. 22-24	Youth Ministers Conference; Lake Tiak O'Khata, Louisville; 1:30 p.m., 22nd-1 p.m., 24th (CAPM)
Oct. 25	Student Day at the Baptist Building; 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. (CoMi)
Oct. 26-27	Adult Choir Festival; FBC, Gulfport; 7-9 p.m. (CM) GA Mother/Daughter Overnight; Camp Garawa; 4 p.m., 26th-1 p.m., 27th (WMU)
Oct. 27	VBS Early Bird Clinic; Crossgates BC, Brandon; 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (SS)

# THE VILLAGE VIEW

## The Baptist Children's Village

Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director



P. O. Box 27,  
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(601) 922-2242



## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of the Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

### MEMORIALS

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August 31, 1990

Dr. H. L. Jacobs  
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Mr. Robert Jaynes  
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Scott & Vernon  
Mrs. Esther D. Jefferies  
Mrs. W. R. Newman, III  
Mrs. Evelyn Johnson  
Mrs. Celia Hansen  
Mrs. Alma Joiner  
Ms. Jane W. Gayden  
Ms. Beatrice Scott Jones  
Ms. Fannie Mae Scott & Family  
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Mr. W. C. Jones  
Sharon L. Francis  
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Mr. & Mrs. Leon Fortune  
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Mr. James Kimbrell  
Ms. Juanita C. Coleman  
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Mr. & Mrs. Virgil King, III  
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Mrs. Cecil Boswell  
Mrs. Mary Ashmore  
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Mr. & Mrs. Hubert Clegg  
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Barney & Myrtle Cook  
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Dixie Abbey  
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Mr. Bernice Mangum  
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Mrs. Grace Ashburn  
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Mr. & Mrs. Jim Mathis  
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Myrl McCormick  
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Mr. Larry Smith  
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Mr. & Mrs. Truman Moore & Girls  
Mr. Virgil Smith  
Mr. Bubba Lang  
Mr. Virgil Smith  
Mrs. C. H. Hawkins  
Mrs. Wood Polk  
Mr. J. T. Squires  
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Turner  
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Mrs. Jean Prather  
Mrs. Sadie Stanley  
Mr. & Mrs. J. P. Kelly  
Mrs. Betty Steen  
Boyd & Billie McGlaun  
Mrs. E. B. Womack  
Mrs. Betty Steen  
Ms. Earline Woods  
Mrs. Judge E. Stewart  
Mr. & Mrs. John O. Hemphill  
Mr. Judge E. Stewart  
Mr. & Mrs. John O. Hemphill  
Mrs. Olivia Stinson  
Mrs. Grace Ashburn  
Ms. Bertha Strickland  
Mrs. Dorothy M. Terry  
Mr. John W. Sultan  
Faith Sunday School, FBC Grenada  
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Mr. & Mrs. Sam Langley  
Mr. Ray Summerhill  
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Mr. Bill Summers, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. W. J. Simmons  
Mrs. Helen Simmons  
Mrs. Blanche Sykes  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Cole  
Mr. Jim Q. Tatum, Sr.  
Mrs. J. T. Callicoat  
Rev. Dan Taylor  
Sanctuary Choir, First Baptist Church Oxford, MS  
Mr. Bill Robbins  
Mrs. Jewel Johnson  
Mr. J. T. Robbins  
Mr. & Mrs. John McFadden  
Mr. Monroe Robbins  
Billy & Ann Gardner  
Mr. Monroe Robbins  
Mrs. Howard Hooper  
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Mr. & Mrs. F. L. Marvil  
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Mr. Otis Rogers  
Mr. & Mrs. J. E. Bagby  
Mr. Pete Romeo  
Mrs. Charles Peyton  
Lt. Peter Romeo  
Mr. & Mrs. James T. Ballard



## Coming Up . . .

Teacher receptions scheduled in October for each campus. This event is especially designed to allow teachers of our young people to meet our Child Care Workers. We look forward to meeting each of you.

## ASSOCIATIONAL MEETINGS

October Associational Meetings are held and The Baptist Children's Village representatives who are on the road are: Rev. Ronny Robinson, Rev. Jerry Jackson, Mr. Henry Glaze, Rev. Karl McGraw, Mr. John Nowlin, Mr. Freddie Leonard, Mr. Gary O. Parker, III, Mr. Mike Crocker, and Mr. Terry Wills.

Several of our Associations have invited The Baptist Children's Village to be a part of their program — to share in our ministry. Thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. John Turner	Ms. Margaret Webster	Mrs. Gladys Winstead
Barney & Myrtis Cook	Mr. Jimmy Wilson	TEL Sunday School, Springfield BC
Mrs. Thomas N. Turner	Mrs. Lillian Wells	Mrs. Gladys Winstead
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Broadway	Mrs. Mary Gainey	Floyd & Rose Coil
Mrs. Inez B. Turnipseed	Mrs. Lillian Wells	Mr. Mabern Wise
Mr. & Mrs. Monroe McElveen	Miss Beth M. Hendricks	Meadie & Billy Joe Williams
Mrs. Jovita Weldon	Mrs. Blanch Minks	Mr. T. M. Withers
The Miss-Lou Hemerocallis Society	Mr. & Mrs. Roy D. Hendricks	Graeber Brothers, Inc.
Mr. Jack Q. Causey MD	Deluncy Wheeles	Grenada, MS
Mr. Ralph VanLandingham	Shuqualak BC	Mr. & Mrs. Bill Barbee
Mrs. Cecil Boswell	Mr. James D. Whiddon	Mr. John M. Wygul
Mr. Frank Vaught	Mr. Hatton	Mrs. Bessie T. Parrish
Mr. & Mrs. D. Allen	Mr. Robert White	Mrs. Cornelius Wood
Ms. Betty Dean Vickers	Mr. & Mrs. Walton M. Caughman	Ruth Sunday School, FBC Leland
Frank & Opal Vickers	Mr. W. T. White	Mrs. Gladys Woods
Mrs. Glenna Waldrop	Mrs. Lorene Canty	Mr. & Mrs. Mark Scruggs
Mr. & Mrs. A. R. Mauriocourt	Mrs. Alice Wiggins	Mr. & Mrs. E. E. Randle
Mrs. T. B. Waldrop	Stanton Baptist Church, Natchez	Mrs. Gladys Woods
Mrs. Mildred Stamps	Mrs. Sam Ray Wilkerson	Dr. & Mrs. James H. Brewer
Mr. Nick Walker	Mr. & Mrs. George Gatewood	Mr. George Day Wynne, Sr.
Mrs. Elizabeth Tate	Mrs. Annelie Williams	Mr. & Mrs. Ad Rutledge
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Mr. & Mrs. Henry McCormick	Mr. Wright Williams	Edith M. Aldridge
Mr. William Howard Walker	Ms. Jane Sutton	Mr. & Mrs. Fred Powers
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Mr. John Robert Waller	Billy M. Sherman Family	Mr. & Mrs. Dutch Farmer & Timmy
Betty Hall	Mr. Danny Wilson	Mrs. Janice Young
Mr. E. M. Walton	Mrs. R. S. Watkins	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Dugan & Family
Mrs. Mavis Trotter	Mrs. C. A. Springs	
Yale Street Baptist Church Cleveland, MS	Miss Tracy Wascomb	
Lt. Peter Romeo	Mr. & Mrs. Harry L. McLeod	
Mrs. Charles Peyton	Mr. & Mrs. G. B. Parter	
Mrs. A. J. Turner		
Mr. & Mrs. James T. Ballard		

